

## ABSTRACT OF DISCLOSURE

A system and method to facilitate escape from a building in an emergency which includes apparatus for monitoring at least a part of a building for a life threatening conditions selected from the group consisting of fire, seismological and terrorist threats. The system also includes a fire ladder having a compact position and a deployed position. The fire ladder in the deployed position extends generally vertically. The system further includes apparatus for mounting the fire ladder proximate to the lower edge of an associated window in the building and apparatus for releasably retaining the fire ladder in the compact position. In addition the system further includes apparatus for releasing the fire ladder that is responsive to the apparatus for monitoring. The rungs of the ladder may have projections dimensioned and configured to rest against the side of the associated building when the ladder is deployed along the side of the associated building.